

LITHUANIA CLOSES MOST INDUSTRIES

Acts to Conserve Fuel During Embargo by Moscow — Compromise Is Sought

VILNIUS, Lithuania, April 21 (AP) — Lithuania closed its factories today to conserve fuel and raw materials during an expanding Kremlin embargo.

Leaders of the republic said that they still were seeking a compromise with Moscow but that no firm proposals were under discussion.

Moscow has cut all oil and more than 80 percent of Lithuania's natural gas supply since Wednesday in an effort to get the Baltic republic to rescind independence measures.

Officials have said the supplies of some food products, tires, cable and other goods from Soviet sources were also being curtailed.

'Not to Waste Our Strength'

Saturday is a normal working day in Lithuania but Deputy Prime Minister Romualdas Ozolas said the majority of the factories were not working.

"We decided not to waste our strength while it is not necessary," Mr. Ozolas said.

Traffic on the streets of Vilnius, the capital, was light as motorists grappled with a rationing plan that limits them to about seven gallons of gasoline a month.

Mr. Ozolas said some factories that were still open today would probably have to close beginning on Monday because of shortages of fuel and raw materials.

Lithuania voted on March 11 to restore the independence that it lost when it was annexed to the Soviet Union in 1940.

Estonia Offers Aid

The neighboring republic of Estonia, which is also moving toward independence, has offered aid to Lithuania. Estonia and Latvia were also annexed by Moscow in 1940.

A delegation from Lithuania arrived in Denmark today for talks on ways of obtaining oil to counteract the Soviet blockade. The delegation, led by Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene, met Norwegian oil officials on Friday.

"Other countries shouldn't leave us alone to solve this problem," Mrs. Prunskiene said.

President Vytautas Landsbergis of Lithuania said today, "The threat we are facing is very great." He said at an opening session of a congress of the nationalist movement Sajudis that Lithuania was searching for a compromise with Moscow, but that there were no proposals on the table.

But Mr. Landsbergis did say some compromise proposals have been raised in talks with the Kremlin through negotiators. He did not elaborate.

Beatings by Soviet Soldiers

At the Sajudis session, Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar of Estonia spoke of the beating of Lithuanian civilians on Friday by Soviet soldiers who occupied a Vilnius printing plant.

"What happened in Vilnius yesterday could happen in Tallinn tomorrow," he said, referring to the Estonian capital. "Estonians understand this and are ready to share the hardships."

In a message to President Mikhail S. Gorbachev late Friday, Lithuania's Supreme Council said the republic's independence could not harm the Soviet Union, and it again expressed willingness to negotiate.

The cablegram to Mr. Gorbachev demanded, however, that the Soviet soldiers who stormed the Communist Party printing plant on Friday and roughed up civilian guards there be punished.

"We have no doubt that the brutal beating of civilian residents, as in the actions taken by groups of Soviet armed forces in Vilnius today, will await your condemnation and that those guilty will be punished," the message said.

The Sajudis congress was called to discuss changes in the two-year-old movement's strategy.

Mr. Landsbergis rejected a suggestion that the movement become a permanent opposition party.

"To say that Sajudis is in principle an opposition force and always in opposition, I can't agree with that because we would turn coats very often," he said.

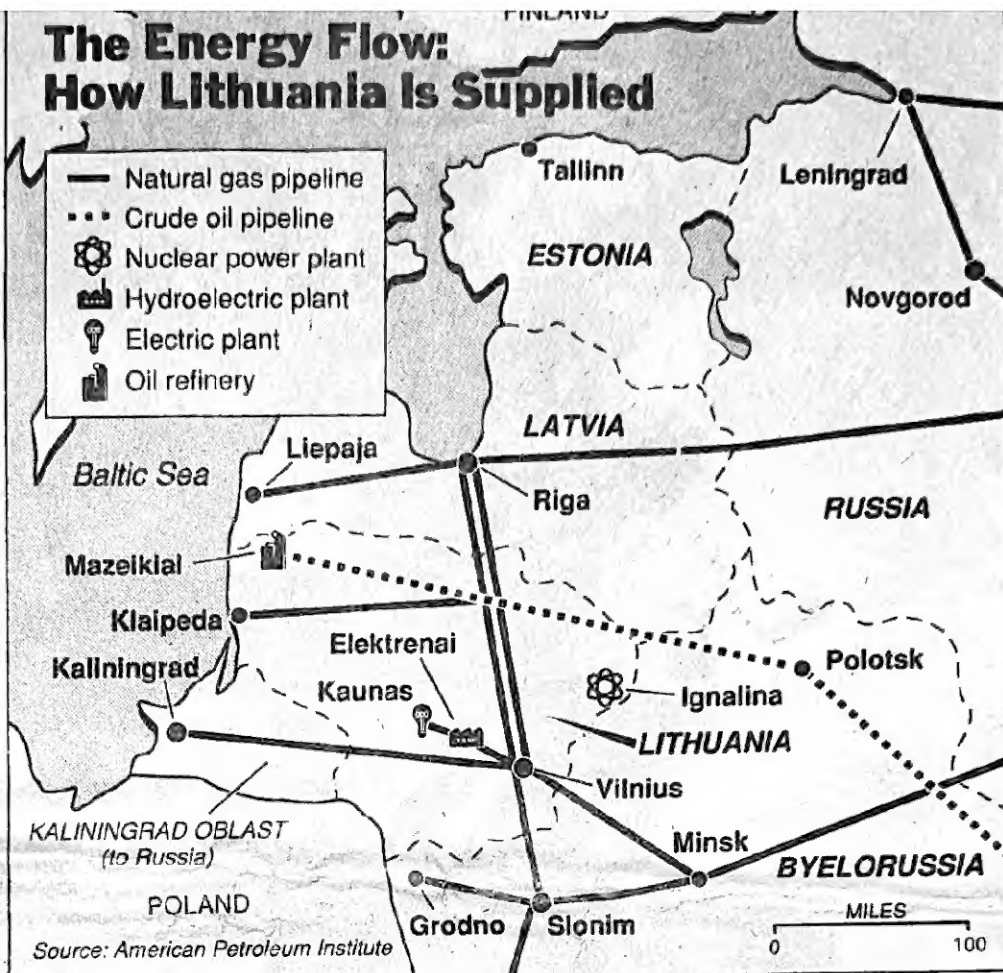
The Communist Party faction still loyal to the Kremlin opened a congress of its own in the Lithuanian capital today. The official Tass press agency said the issue of independence, the termination of oil supplies and cutback of natural gas would be discussed by the 800 delegates.

Tension between supporters and opponents of Lithuanian independence "is mounting, and other acute problems are coming to light," Tass said.

Despite military and economic pressure, Lithuanians have refused to back off their declaration of independence as Mr. Gorbachev has demanded.

Another Deputy Prime Minister, Algirdas Brazauskas, told Lithuania on Friday that it must compromise on its independence decisions or face critical shortages of oil and natural gas in two weeks.

The Energy Flow: How Lithuania Is Supplied



The New York Times/April 22, 1990



Reuters

President Vytautas Landsbergis of Lithuania, left, and Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar of Estonia at the opening of the Lithuanian nationalist movement

congress. Mr. Savisaar told the group that what was happening in Lithuania could happen in Estonia and that Estonians "are ready to share the hardships."



Associated Press

As Soviet economic pressure on Lithuania continued, a delegation led by Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene, left, arrived in Copenhagen yesterday

on a two-day visit to seek emergency energy assistance. Greeting her at the airport was H. P. Clausen, chairman of the Danish Parliament.